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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|---|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/071,672 | 02/08/2002 | Fabio Sorze | 1610-85 | 4025 |
| 30448 | 7590 | 12/10/2003 | EXAMINER | |
| AKERMAN SENTERFITT P.O. BOX 3188 WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33402-3188 | | | JOYCE, WILLIAM C | |
| | | ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER | |
| | | 3682 | | |

DATE MAILED: 12/10/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) |
| | 10/071,672 | SORZE, FABIO |
| | Examiner William C. Joyce | Art Unit 3682 |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appars on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 February 2002.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

| | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

This is the First Office Action in response to the above identified patent application filed on February 8, 2002.

Priority

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Specification

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: Each section of the specification must have a heading (i.e. "Brief Summary of the Invention", "Brief Description of the Drawings", and "Detailed Description of the Invention." Appropriate correction is required.
3. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

4. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it contains legal phraseology, such as "means." Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

-In claim 1, the limitation "second coupling means between said parts suitable to allow in an elastic way or, as an alternative, to prevent mutual movements of said parts along two directions parallel to the planes of the two parts and *perpendicular to each other...*" is not fully understood how the two parts can move in a direction perpendicular to each other.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

8. Claims 1 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Inaba et al. (USP 4,820,114).

Inaba et al. disclose a lockable joint comprising a first part (1,3), a second part (2,7), first coupling means (4,5) between the parts to maintain the parts at a pre-set distance and on parallel planes to each other, second coupling means (31) between

said parts suitable to allow in an elastic way or, as an alternative, to prevent mutual movements of said parts along two directions parallel to the planes of the two parts and perpendicular to each other and around an axis perpendicular to the planes.

9. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Sturges, Jr. et al. (USP 5,396,714).

Sturges, Jr. et al. disclose a lockable joint comprising a first part, a second part, first coupling means (122) between the parts to maintain the parts at a pre-set distance and on parallel planes to each other, second coupling means between said parts suitable to allow in an elastic way or, as an alternative, to prevent mutual movements of said parts along two directions parallel to the planes of the two parts and perpendicular to each other and around an axis perpendicular to the planes.

10. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kasai (JP 63-57128).

Kasai disclose a lockable joint comprising a first part, a second part, first coupling means (4) between the parts to maintain the parts at a pre-set distance and on parallel planes to each other, second coupling means (10,30) between said parts suitable to allow in an elastic way or, as an alternative, to prevent mutual movements of said parts along two directions parallel to the planes of the two parts and perpendicular to each other and around an axis perpendicular to the planes.

Allowable Subject Matter

11. Claims 3-6 and 8 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Note the compliant device of Watson ('001), Drake et al. ('169), Brendamour ('153), Sharon ('334), Hounsfield et al. ('667), Quinton et al. ('923) and Rebman ('802).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William C. Joyce whose telephone number is (703) 305-5114. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 7:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bucci can be reached on (703) 308-3668. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9326.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

William C. Joyce 12/3/03
William C. Joyce